



# COUNTY OF MONTEREY CAO Weekly Report

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## SPECIALREPORT



*Janet Corey (center) receives a resolution from Sheriff Steve Bernal (left) in honor of her great-great-grandfather who was one of the first Monterey County deputies to die in the line of duty.*

## County Notes

- > Caltrans wants your input about its Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan which will shape future developments. [Fill out the questionnaire](#) by November 6th.

## Ceremony Honoring Fallen Deputies Makes Historic Connection

Each year, the Sheriff's Office honors its fallen deputies during a ceremony at a memorial wall in their honor. This year's event included an unexpected addition, a descendant of one of the first deputies to die in the line of duty.

For law enforcement as well as friends and relatives of fallen deputies, this yearly event is a way to remember the sacrifices made and remind the community of the dangers of protecting the public.

There are eight names on the memorial wall, four of them from modern times which allow relatives to remember their loved ones.

But four of the names are of deputies from 90 to 161 years ago. In fact, no one from the Sheriff's Office had been able to find a descendant of the first deputy named on the list, who died in 1855, until now. Through an interesting twist of fate, a great-great-granddaughter of the county's first fallen sheriff's deputy was found by a Sheriff's Captain who, as it turns out, has known her for years.

"Janet Corey is a close friend of my mother in Susanville where I lived prior to coming to Monterey County," explains Captain John Mineau. "My mom told Janet about my new job and Janet mentioned her great-great-grandfather Joaquin De La Torre was the first Sheriff's Deputy killed in the line of duty there."

Mineau shared this revelation with members of the Sheriff's Remembrance Committee who quickly invited Corey to the ceremony. For Corey, the ceremony was a meaningful tribute and moving end to a long search.

"I knew the De La Torre name, but nothing else," says Janet who started her family search many years ago and renewed her efforts when she moved to Susanville. "A friend here is a member of Los Californios, an early California heritage group. Through them I found that his full name was Jose Joaquin Carmen Santiago de la Torre. I then contacted the Esselen Tribe genealogist, who told me the story of De La Torres' death during an ambush."

Joaquin de la Torre was shot during an ambush in 1855 along with another deputy, Charles Layton. During his lifetime, he was an interesting man of early California - he worked in the Custom House in Monterey, served in the Mexican Army and was the recipient of two land grants, one near Castroville and the other near Greenfield.

Corey says she was both thrilled and humbled to represent her family at the remembrance ceremony.

"The Sheriff gave a beautiful address about those who know the risk they take to serve, the risk that they might not come home one night," she says.

A risk that is the same today as it was in 1855.



*The Sheriff's Color Guard at the memorial ceremony.*

## Volunteers for Vets Needed at King City Library

Monterey County Free Libraries is looking for a few good men - or women - to help veterans find out more about accessing services and programs they are entitled to. Can you help?



*Military and Veterans Affairs Officer George Dixon (left) King City Branch Manager Robin Cauntay (center) and San Ardo Branch Manager Martin Zuniga announce the new Veterans Resource Center.*

Military veterans in Monterey County have a new one-stop shop to help them find information about the many services and resources available to them, thanks to the Monterey County Free Libraries (MCFL) and a grant from the California State Library and Cal-Vet.

The King City Branch of MCFL has opened a Veterans Resource Center with books, DVDs and pamphlets on topics such as state and federal benefits, housing, healthcare, education and employment. It is the only Veterans Connect library location between San Jose and Santa Barbara and more convenient for south county vets who may not want to drive to the Veterans Transition Center in Marina for help.

The center has two dedicated laptops and free printing for use by veterans. The tools are in place, but volunteers to assist veterans are needed.

“We know this program will make it much more convenient for veterans to look up information,” says Library Director Jayanti Addleman. “The center is in the library to make it accessible, but the centers themselves will be run by volunteers, so we are getting the word out to those who would like to help.”

Starting November 4th, volunteers are needed every Friday between 10:30 a.m. and 2:30 p.m. to be on hand to help veterans with any assistance they might need. If you can help, please call the King City Library at 385-3677.

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## County Storm Preparedness Workshop

The timing couldn't have been better. Just as a winter storm was approaching with rain threatening wildfire areas, the county's emergency managers were meeting this week with cities, agencies and utilities who all play a role when winter storms wreak havoc.

The Office of Emergency Services' annual Winter Storm Preparedness Workshop was held this week at Hartnell College. In attendance were many of the agencies who play an important role in a storm disaster such as PG&E, the National Weather Service, RMA-Public Works and local fire chiefs.

All the agencies got a weather briefing on what the National Weather Service is expecting this winter and heard presentations from the Water Resources Agency on the status of rain gauges in the Soberanes Fire area and PG&E regarding how it will stage crews as storms approach. Discussions ranged from accessing sandbags to where residents can dispose of debris flow mud in the aftermath of a storm.

On the minds of many at the workshop, the Soberanes and Chimney Fire areas and the potential for debris flow due to rain. Agencies discussed how to ensure communications among themselves as well as affected residents in the event of a dangerous weather event and what preparations were happening specifically in and for the fire area due to the expected storm this coming weekend.

Emergency Planner Pat Moore said the best thing about the event was the collaboration and sharing of information and the diversity of cities and agencies who participated.

The hope is no one will be called on during this weekend's stormy weather, but if so, they're ready.



*Area agencies share their preparedness plans during roundtable discussion (above). Big Sur Fire Brigade Chief Martha Karstens (below center) listens during the workshop. Her fire station is closest to burn areas that could suffer debris flow during heavy rains.*

